Title : Selection for the post of Chairman, Sahitya Academy.

SHRI M. SHIVANNA (CHAMRAJANAGAR): Sir, I wish to bring an important matter to the notice of this House which presently is disturbing a number of writers of Indian languages. The matter concern the appointment of the new Secretary of Sahitya Akademi, our national Akademi of letters. It is well known that Sahitya Akademi was founded by the first prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who was also the first President of the Akademi and who laid the cornerstone of its Autonomy which is jealously guarded by eminent writers till this date. The present Secretary of Sahitya Akademi is retiring on 31 may 2006 and the new Secretary has to immediately take over. But it is extremely disturbing that efforts are being made by some vested interests to scuttle the autonomy of the Akademi and thwart the joining of the new Secretary, Sri A. Krishna Murthy, whom a statutory selection committee has unanimously selected for the most of Secretary, Sahitya Akademi. recently a Momorandum has been issued by more than 90 eminent writers of North and South including Jnanpith awardees, Fellows and Awardes of the Sahitya Akademi and other eminent writers of a number of languages urging the Ministry of Culture, Union Government to issue clearance for the appointment of the new Secretary as early as possible since an august institution like Sahitya Akademi cannot function even for a day without the Secretary, as he is the Chief Executive of the Akademi.

This must be noted that Sri A. Krishna Murthy was selected as the Regional Secretary by none other than the stalwart of Kannada literature and Jnanpith Awardee, Prof. V. K. Gokak. Sri Krishna Murthy has served as Regional Secretary for 20 years. Sri Krishna Murthy himself an eminent writer in Kannada, he has got seven publications to his credit one of which won the Karnataka Sahitya Academy Award and he is also the winner of Kempegowda Award and S. R. Patil Award.

---

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

It must be pointed that Padmabhusan Prof. Gopi Chand Narang, President of Sahitya Academy has acted in a most impartial way and the selection of the Secretary was made through a transparent democratic process by a selection committee consisting of Professor Gopi Chand Narang, President, Sahitya Academy, Sri Sunil Gangopadhyay, Vice-President, Sahitya Akademi, Professor Bholabhai patel, well known Gujarati writer, Professor Chandrasekhar Kambar, eminent playwright and poet in Kannada, Professor Udayanarayan Singh, Director, Cenral Institute of Indian languages and Sri Priyadarshi Thakur, Secretary, Ministry of Heavy Industries, Union Govt. of india. They recommnded Sri Krishna Murthy's name and subsequently the decision was unanimously approved by the Executive Board of the Akademi in its meeting held in April 2006.

Therefore, I would like to urge the Minister of Culture, Union Government to ensure that the clearance may please be given at the earliest to the democratically selected candidate without any further delay.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (CUTTACK): I associate myself with the subject raised by him.